

Structure/Site Information Form

IDENTIFICATION 1

Street Address: 00272 S MAIN ST

UTM:

Name of Structure: Clift Building

12/424810/4512620
T. 01.0 S R. 01.0 W S. 01Present Owner: WAGNER*ILENE*J* ET AL
424 KENNECOTT BLDG

WAGNER INV CO

Owner Address: SLC, UT

84111

Year Built (Tax Record):

Effective Age:

Tax #: 01 2179

Legal Description

01 Kind of Building: MISC.COMMERCIAL BLDG

COM AT SE COR LOT 1, BLK 58, PLAT "A", SLC SUR, N 79.5 FT; W 10 RDS; S 79.5 FT E 10 RDS TO BEG. ALSO COM FR SW COR LOT 1, BLK 58, PLAT "A", SLC SUR., N 79.5 FT; W 5 FT; S 79.5 FT; E 5 FT TO BEG.

STATUS/USE 2

Original Owner: Virtue Clift

Construction Date: 1919

Demolition Date:

Original Use: commercial

Present Use: commercial

Building Condition:

Integrity:

Preliminary Evaluation:

Final Register Status:

☒ Excellent☐ Site☐ Unaltered☒ Significant☐ Not of the☐ National Landmark☐ District☐ Good☐ Ruins☒ Minor Alterations☐ Contributory

Historic Period

☐ National Register☐ Multi-Resource☐ Deteriorated☐ Major Alterations☐ Not Contributory☐ State Register☐ Thematic

Photography:

Date of Slides:

Slide No.:

Date of Photographs: Fall '79

Photo No.:

Views: ☐ Front ☐ Side ☐ Rear ☐ OtherViews: ☒ Front ☒ Side ☐ Rear ☐ Other

Research Sources:

☐ Abstract of Title☒ Sanborn Maps☒ Newspapers☐ U of U Library☒ Plat Records/Map☒ City Directories☒ Utah State Historical Society☐ BYU Library☒ Tax Card & Photo☒ Biographical Encyclopedias☐ Personal Interviews☐ USU Library☒ Building Permit☒ Obituary Index☐ LDS Church Archives☐ SLC Library☐ Sewer Permit☐ County & City Histories☐ LDS Genealogical Society☐ Other

Bibliographical References (books, articles, records, interviews, old photographs and maps, etc.):

Salt Lake City Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1898, 1911, 1930, 1958, University of Utah Library

Salt Lake County Records, Block 58, Plat A, C-1,p.186, C-11,p.191, C-21,p.216,

C-31,p.242, C-41,p.212-B

R.L. Polk & Co., Salt Lake City Directory, 1920-1968

Salt Lake City Building Permit, November 28, 1919, #4554

Salt Lake City Building Permit, October 28, 1927, #6699

Alter, J. Cecil, Storied Domain, volume 1, p.177, Francis D. CliftDeseret News, December 23, 1913, p.16, Francis D. Clift obituaryDeseret News, October 24, 1925, p.3, Virtue Clift obituaryJanson, Andrew, Journal History of the Church, 1854, January 12, p.3

August 29, p.1, 1863; September 30, 1894, p.10; September 6, 1913, p.5;

December 21, p.2 "Francis D. Clift".

Architect/Builder: James L. Chesebro/Larsen-Sampson Co.

Building Materials: concrete, brick, glazed terra cotta

Building Type/Style:

Description of physical appearance & significant architectural features:

(Include additions, alterations, ancillary structures, and landscaping if applicable)

The Clift Building is one of Salt Lake City's largest terra cotta-faced structures. An eight-story building, designed by Leslie Chesebro, architect of East High School, the facades are eclectic in design but relate most to the Second Renaissance Revival Style. Horizontal banding and three secondary cornices or belt courses balance the verticality of the elevations. The upper floor is the most decorative, featuring a bracketed projecting cornice and protruding window bays at the corners of the building, with Greek pediments. All window bays are square. Decorative plaques with the letter "C" are located on the piers between the windows of the second floors. Aside from modifications along the first floor, the building's architectural integrity is intact. The Clift Building occupies an anchor position on South Main Street opposite the Judge Building.



Statement of Historical Significance:

Construction Date: 1919

Pleasing in scale, proportion, and style treatment, the Clift Building has been an integral part of Salt Lake City's central business district since its construction in 1919. It displays the use of glazed terra cotta on a grand scale, to entirely face the primary facade of an eight story building. The Clift Building retains its original character and integrity except for some street level modifications.

The Clift Building was constructed in 1919 by Virtue Clift in honor of her late husband, Francis D. Clift. This was originally the site of the old Clift Hotel, a popular Salt Lake boarding house in the late 19th century.

The Clift family has a long history in the state of Utah. Francis Clift was a pioneer mining man and financier who came to Utah by ox team with the Walker Brothers, Henry Lawrence and John Clark, a former mayor of Salt Lake City. They arrived in the valley in 1851. Soon after arriving, Francis Clift opened the "Town Clock Store" a general merchandising store, at 154 South Main. He made eight trips across the plains by ox team hauling goods from St. Louis and other points in Missouri where he bought goods to supply this store. He was one of the first men in Utah to invest in mining. He early bought an interest in the Emma Mine in Big Cottonwood Canyon--the first discovered and worked mine in Utah. With the profits from this venture, he invested in Salt Lake real estate. In addition to this property, he owned the building at 262 South Main, occupied for many years by the Boston Store, and the Gladstone Building at 117 South Main. Francis Clift was born in England December 7, 1832 and died in Salt Lake City December 21, 1913. Only his wife, Virtue Clift, survived him.

Virtue Butcher Clift was also born in England, March 10, 1838. Her family joined the LDS Church there and she came to the United States with her mother and two sisters in 1849. She married Francis D. Clift in 1854 at the age of sixteen. At the time of his death, she inherited her husband's large estate and proved herself a wise businesswoman in dealing with his affairs. She had the Clift House torn down and replaced with a new commercial office building bearing the same name.

Following her death in 1925, title to the building fell to the Clift Building Corporation, then to the Utah Oil Refining Co. in 1958 and the American Oil Co. in 1960. American Oil changed the name of the building to the American Oil Building. In 1971 American Oil sold the building to Elizabeth Simmons. Ilene J. Wagner of the Wagner Investment Co. is the current owner.

The first occupants of the Clift Building in 1920 were the United Cigar Stores Co., the Schuback Optical Co., Western Union Telegraph Co. and the Kinema Theater. By 1928, the Kinema, managed by William Cutts, had become the Rialto Theater, but otherwise, the four companies occupied the building for twenty years. The Rialto still operated as a theater in 1968, a near 50 year term of occupancy. Fernwood's Candy Co. had their offices in this building from 1952-60, Western Union and United Cigar Stores from 1920 to 1956. The building is currently used, as it has been historically, as commercial office space.